

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 904

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PGOV, NL

SUBJECT: NEW DUTCH GOVERNMENT: FORMATEUR AND CONFESSIONALS
ONCE

MORE AT LOGGERHEADS

REF: THE HAGUE 1210

1. SUMMARY: FORMATEUR BURGER INFORMED CONFESSIONAL FLOOR LEADER ANDRIESSEN (KVP) ANDAANTJES (ARP) MAR 15 THAT CHU HAD EXCLUDED ITSELF FROM DEN UYL CABINET. HE REJECTED CONFESSIONAL DEMAND FOR CLARIFICATION OF PORTIONS OF LEFT WING' S GOVT PROGRAM. BURGER WARNED THAT HE MIGHT BE COMPELLED TO " COMPLETE HIS EFFORT" WITHOUT FURTHER CONSULTATIONS WITH CONFESSIONALS. BOTH ANDRIESSEN AND AANTJES COMMENTED THAT IF BURGER ADHERED TO PRESENT POSITION THEY NO LONGER SAW " OPENINO" IN FORMATION HE HAD TALKED OF MAR 9. AFTER SESSION WITH FORMATEUR EVENING MAR 15 THREE TRADE UNION LEADERS REITERATED THEIR SUPPORT HIS EFFORT. RADICAL PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING IN UTRECHT MAR 15 REJECTED RESOLUTION CALLING FOR PPR TO WITHDRAW SUPPORT FOR BURGER AND CALL FOR NEW ELECTIONS. LABOR PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE WILL MEET TONIGHT (MAR 16) TO DISCUSS FORMATION. BURGER WILL PROBABLY DECIDE NEXT STEPS AFTER RESULTS THIS MEETING KNOWN. END SUMMARY.

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2. FLOOR LEADERS OF KVP AND ARP (ANDRIESSEN AND AANTJES) REPLIED TO BURGER' S LETTER OF MAR 12 ON MAR 15. THEY SAID IT WAS POSSIBLE FOR BURGER' S EFFORT TO SUCEED IN RELATIVELY SHORT TIME BUT ONLY IF HE TALKED TO CHU LEADER TILANUS AND WITH THE THREE CONFESSIONAL LEADERS ABOUT ASPECTS OF THE LEFT WING ELECTORAL PLATFORM (WHICH IN AN UPDATED FORM WOULD SERVE AS THE NEW GOVT' S PROGRAM). IN MAR 16 REPLY BURGER MAINTAINED CHU HAD EXCLUDED ITSELF FROM DEN UYL CABINET. HE SAID THERE COULD BE NO QUESTION OF PROGRAMMATIC DISCUSSIONS ALTHOUGH DEN UYL WILLING TO MEET WITH CONFESSIONIONALS TO " CLARIFY" PARTS OF PROGRAM. BURGER CONCLUDED: " UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCEE, I DO NOT SEE HOW YOU SUGGEST A SOLUTION IS POSSIBLE IN A SHORT TIME. I HAVE THE DISAGREEABLE IMPRESSION THAT YOU ARE MAKING IT NECESSARY FOR ME TO FINISH UP MY FORMATION ACTIVITIES WITH OR WITHOUT FURTHER CONSULTATIONS." THE CONFESSIONAL LEADERS WHO TERMED BURGER' S REPLY " SURPRISING," SAID THAT IF HE STUCK TO THIS POSITION THEY NO LONGER SAW THE " OPENING" FORMATEAR HAD TALKED OF A WEEK EARLIER (THE HAGUE 1142). KVP' S ANDRIESSEN RECALLED BURGER' S MANDATE IS TO FORM GOVT " WHICH WOULD ENJOY SUFFICIENT SUPPORT IN THE CHAMBER." HE SAID GIVEN BURGER' S PRESENT POSITION, HE WOULD BE UNABLE FULFILL THIS MANDATE.

3, WHILE CONFESSIONALS REACTING SOMBERLY TO BURGER' S LATEST LETTER, FORMATEUR WAS MEETING WITH CHAIRMAN OF THREE TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS (DEBOON, NVV; MERTENS, NKV; AND LANSER, CNV). AT CONCLUSION OF SESSION LATE TTRRSDAY NIGHT (MAR 62\$ THE SABOR LEADERS REITERATED THE

SUPPORT FOR BURGER AND THE " PROGRESSIVE" CABINET HE TRYING TO FORM. VV' S DE BOON CHARACTERIZED PRESENT SITUATION AS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT BUT NOT HOPELESS. MERTENS SAID NKV WAS ALREADY TO OFFER DEN UYL GOVT CANDIDATE MINISTERS IF KVP WAS NOT AND SAID HE HIMSELF WOULD ACCEPT PORTFOLIO IF BURGER ASKED.

4. POLITICAL PARTY OF RADICALS (PPR) HAD STORMY FIVE HOURS SESSION IN UTRECHT EVENING MAR 15. PARTY LEADERYEIP SUCCEDED IN DEFEAT ON RESOLUTION REQUIREING PPR TO WITHDRAW SUPPORT FOR BURGER EFFORT AND RECOMMEND NEW ELECTIONS. RADICAL FLOOR LEADER DE GAAY FORTMAN, WHO DEPLORED LACK OF CONFIDENCE SOME RADICALS HAD IN PARTY LEADERSHIP, SAID ALTERNATIVE WAS NOT NEW ELECTIONS BUT REVIVAL OF CONFESSIONAL- LIBERAL PARTNERSH H. RESOLUTION ADOPTED SUPPORTING

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CURRENT LEADERSHIP POLICY DID SPECIFY, HOWEVER, THAT 10 CONFES-
SIONAL 6 LEFT WING PORTFOLIO DISTRIBUTION
WAS ULTIMATE CONCESSION
LABOR PARTY CE
TRAL COMMITTEE SCHEDULED TO MEET IN UTRECHT
THIS EVENING (MAR 16) TO DISCUSS FORMATION.

5. COMMENT: BURGER'S LATEST LETTER TO CONFESSORIAL FLOORLEADERS
AND STRONG SUPPORT HE HAS RECEIVED FROM TRADE UNIONS INDICATES
HE MIGHT TRY REPEAT OF HIS TACTICS WITH ARP AND ATTEMPT TO
SECURE KVP MINISTERS WITHOUT CONSULTATIONS WITH PARLIAMENTARY
GROUP. BUT JUSTICE MINISTER VAN AGT WHO MET WITH BURGER MAR 14 AND
WAS OFFERED SEAT IN DEN UYL CABINET SAID HE WOULD NOT ACCEPT
WITHOUT APPROVAL OF ANDRIESEN. THUS BURGER COULD ENCOUNTER FAR
MORE PROBLEMS WITH KVP THAN HE DID WITH ARP. AS BEFORE WHEN
THINGS REACHED IMPASSE, THERE ARE RUMORS BURGER ABOUT TO RETURN
HIS MANDATE. BUT PREDICTIONS ABOUT WHAT BURGER WILL OR WILL NOT
DO ARE USUALLY HAZARDOUS. IN ANY CASE, LABOR PARTY CENTRAL COMM-
ITTEE MEETING THIS EVENING COULD BE OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE. FORM-
ATEUR WILL PROBABLY NOT DECIDE ON HIS NEXT STEPS UNTIL RESULTS
THIS MEETING KNOWN. END COMMENT.
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